

Message Text

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21

ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1708

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1040

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RH, ZA

SUBJECT: ZAMBIA AND CURRENT DISSENTION WITHIN RHODESIAN
AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL

REF: LUSAKA 1014

1. GROWING EVIDENCE OF DISSENTION WITHIN ANC, MARKED BY
LAST WEEKEND'S SALISBURY TOWNSHIP RIOTS AND REPORTED
RESIGNATION OF ANC SEC GEN CHAVUNDUKA, UNDERLINES FACT
THAT CENTRIFUGAL FORCES WITHIN ANC ARE STILL VERY STRONG
AND THAT DEC 1974 MERGER AGREEMENT AMONG MAJOR RHODESIAN
LIBERATION MOVEMENTS STILL FAR FROM EFFECTED. FOR
ZAMBIANS, WHO HAVE TAKEN PRIDE IN THEIR EFFORTS SERVE
AS MIDWIFE TO BIRTH OF NEW UNIFIED ANC, THIS EVIDENCE
OF AGREEMENT'S CONTINUING FRAGILITY IS BOTH EMBARRASSING
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AND DISCOURAGING. THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL GRZ REACTION

YET TO JUNE 2 ANC NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VOTE, OBVIOUSLY DOMINATED BY PRO-NKOMO ZAPU ELEMENTS, TO CONVENE LONG-DELAYED CONGRESS ON JUNE 21-22. MOREOVER, WIDE VARIANCE IN ZAMBIAN PRESS EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THIS DECISION (REFTEL) SUGGESTS THAT NO CLEAR GUIDANCE INITIALLY FORTHCOMING FROM STATE HOUSE. THIS MAY INDICATE ZAMBIANS CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY ANC ACTION.

2. MORE LIKELY, HOWEVER, IN OUR ESTIMATION IS THAT ZAMBIAN OFFICIAL SILENCE ON ANC CONGRESS ISSUE BETOKENS IMPLICIT ZAMBIAN SYMPATHY WITH AND EVEN SUPPORT OF MOVE TO CONVENE EARLY CONGRESS. FACT GRZ-OWNED DAILY MAIL CARRIED EDITORIAL IMPLICITLY ENDORSING RIGHT OF ANC NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO TAKE THIS DECISION AND CRITICIZING ZANU ELEMENTS URGING BOYCOTT OF CONGRESS LENDS SOME WEIGHT TO THIS INTERPRETATION. FURTHERMORE, WE HEAR TIMES EDITOR-IN-CHIEF PUNABANTU IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE WITH PRESIDENT AND PARTY LEADERS OVER CONTRADICTORY EDITORIAL WHICH APPEARED HIS PAPER. FOR NUMBER OF REASONS PRES KAUNDA HAS CAUSE TO BE DISENCHANTED WITH CURRENT ANC LEADERSHIP TROIKA ARRANGEMENT.

3. WE DO NOT BELIEVE ZAMBIANS ARE DISPLEASED WITH PERFORMANCE OF BISHOP MUZOREWA AS INTERIM CHAIRMAN SO MUCH AS THEY MAY HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT GENTLE-VOICED PRELATE'S TOUGHNESS AND LONG-TERM STAYING POWER IN FACE OF GROWING ZANU-ZAPU RIFT. BISHOP HAS SHOWN SIGNS OF INCREASING POLITICAL AMBITION AND DOES ENJOY SUPPORT FROM NON-ZAPU ELEMENTS AS ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE CHOICE TO CONTINUE AS ANC CHAIRMAN. HE LACKS SOLID POWER BASE, HOWEVER, AS ANC WHEN IT WAS FORMED IN 1972 WAS BASED PRIMARILY ON ZAPU REGIONAL AND LOCAL CELLS. MUZOREWA'S DETERMINATION TO STICK IT OUT COULD WAVER AND HE MAY YET DECIDE RETURN FULL-TIME TO HIS EPISCOPAL DUTIES.

4. MOREOVER, MUZOREWA HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN STEMMING INTERNAL RIFTS WITHIN ANC, EX-ZANU ELEMENTS ESPECIALLY HAVE RESISTED INTEGRATION OF THEIR POLITICAL AND MILITARY CADRES INTO UNIFIED ANC STRUCTURE, DESPITE PRESSURE FROM ZAMBIA, TANZANIA, AND FRELIMO TO DO SO. ZANU'S EFFORTS TO PRESERVE INDEPENDENT OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY AND NDABANINGI SITHOLE'S LUKEWARM ATTITUDE TOWARD SEARCH FOR POLITICAL SOLUTION AND HIS MILITANT REAFFIRMATION
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TO PRESS THAT ARMED STRUGGLE INEVITABLE SO THAT TALKS WITH SMITH JUST WASTE OF TIME HAVE MADE MORE DIFFICULT COORDINATION OF STRONG AND UNIFIED ANC NEGOTIATING POSTURE VIS-A-VIS RHODESIAN GOVT. MOREOVER, EX-ZANU ELEMENTS HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY VOCAL IN THEIR CRITICISM OF ZAMBIAN DETENTION OF ZANU POLITICAL AND MILITARY PERSONNEL FOR INVESTIGATION INTO DEATHS OF HERBERT CHITEPO AND NUMEROUS OTHERS APPARENTLY SLAIN AS CONSEQUENCE ZANU INTERNAL POLITICAL AND TRIBAL STRIFE. PRES KAUNDA HAS BEEN STUNG

AND OBVIOUSLY EMBARRASSED BY THESE ATTACKS AS WELL AS RELEASE BY PRO-ZANU ANC PUBLICITY SECY EDSON SITHOLE OF TENDENTIOUS REPORT ALLEGING KAUNDA AGREEABLE TO PROLONGED TIMETABLE FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA (LUSAKA 775).

5. FOR ZAMBIANS, THEREFORE, EARLY ELECTION OF NEW ANC LEADERSHIP AT CONGRESS EXPECTED TO BE DOMINATED BY PRO-NKOMO DELEGATES WOULD HAVE SEVERAL ADVANTAGES. PRINCIPAL ONE IS THAT ZANU INFLUENCE WOULD BE DOWNGRADED AND SITHOLE'S DISCORDANT VOICE MUTED. ELECTED AND PRESUMABLY COHESIVE LEADERSHIP SHOULD THEN BE ABLE TO SPEAK MORE AUTHORITATIVELY FOR ANC ON BEHALF OF RHODESIAN BLACKS AND BE LESS SUSCEPTIBLE TO SMITH "DIVIDE AND RULE" TACTICS. MOREOVER, DELAY IN CONVENING CONGRESS LIKELY BRING FURTHER EVIDENCE OF RIFTS WITHIN ANC THAT SMITH WOULD BE QUICK TO EXPLOIT. GROWING FRUSTRATION OF MANY RHODESIAN BLACKS WITH IMPASSE ON CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS ALSO LIKELY REDOUND TO ADVANTAGE OF MORE MILITANT ZANU FACTION WITHIN ANC AND THUS LEAD TO EROSION OF NKOMO'S STILL SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL ORGANIZATION WITHIN RHODESIA. GIVEN PRESENT STRAINS IN GRZ-ZANU RELATIONSHIP AND KAUNDA'S OWN DESIRE SEE RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT ACHIEVED WITH MINIMUM OF VIOLENCE, SWING TOWARD SITHOLE AND AWAY FROM NKOMO WOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS WELCOME NEWS AT STATE HOUSE. ON OTHER HAND, ZAMBIANS MUST BE AWARE THAT OPPOSITION TO EARLY CONVENING OF ANC CONGRESS, NOT ONLY FROM SITHOLE BUT ALSO FROM MUZOREWA AND JAMES CHIKEREMA, WILL MERELY EXACERBATE EXISTING DIVISIONS AND FURTHER WEAKEN ANC ABILITY FACE SMITH AT NEGOTIATING TABLE WITH UNITED NATIONALIST FRONT.

6. FOR THESE REASONS ZAMBIAN LIKELY MOVE CAUTIOUSLY AND PRIMARILY BEHIND SCENES IN DEALING WITH PROBLEMS CREATED BY NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VOTE. SAFE PUBLIC POSITION WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ONE THAT INSISTS DECISION WHETHER TO CONFIDENTIAL

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CONVENE CONGRESS IS MATTER FOR ANC TO DECIDE WHILE APPEALING TO ALL FACTIONS TO ADHERE TO MERGER AGREEMENT REACHED LAST DECEMBER (WHICH, INTER ALIA, CALLED FOR CONVENING OF CONGRESS TO CHOOSE NEW LEADERSHIP WITHIN FOUR MONTHS). BY NOT DENOUNCING VOTE IN FAVOR JUNE 21-22 CONGRESS, ZAMBIANS WOULD NEVERTHELESS BE SEEN TO BE LEANING IN DIRECTION OF NKOMO AND HIS BID TO GAIN CONTROL OF ANC ORGANIZATION. THIS WILL FURTHER EMBITTER ZANU FACTION'S RELATIONS WITH ZAMBIA AND COULD LEAD TO COMPLICATIONS WITH CHINA WHICH IS CERTAIN TO REGARD ANY ENHANCEMENT OF NKOMO AND ZAPU INFLUENCE WITHIN ANC AS A VICTORY FOR SOVIET UNION.

7. UK HICOM LUSAKA ASSESSMENT OF ZAMBIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD NKOMO MOVE TO DOMINATE ANC AGREES WITH OUR OWN.
NELSON

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